Amendment and Response
GCS-001
U.S.S.N. 10/774,185
Page 2

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (currently amended)   A method, comprising:

~~restricting access, by a locking element, to a restricted-access~~ ~~space defined within an enclosure;~~

counting a number of trigger events <u>submitted by a user</u> during successive time intervals, each time interval having a predetermined duration, wherein the number of trigger events counted during a given time interval can be greater than one; ~~and~~

associating the number of trigger events counted in each time interval with one digit of a digit sequence representing a code being submitted <u>by the user</u> ~~to actuate the locking element and gain access to the restricted-access space~~, wherein each digit of the digit sequence corresponds to the number of trigger events counted during one of the successive time intervals and can have a value greater than one; and

<u>storing the code submitted by the user to set an activation code required to activate a control element.</u>

~~determining whether the code represented by the digit sequence actuates the locking element to gain access to the restricted-access space.~~

2. (currently amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

detecting ~~the~~ trigger events during ~~each~~ <u>subsequent successive</u> time interval<u>s</u> based on a sequence of signal interruptions caused by the<u>se</u> trigger events;

representing at least part of the sequence of signal interruptions as a sequence of digital logic levels;

7 comparing the sequence of digital logic levels with ~~a previously~~

8 ~~entered~~ the stored activation code to ascertain an equivalence there

9 between; and

10 based on ascertaining the equivalence, activating the control

11 element ~~actuating the locking element to gain access to the restricted~~

12 ~~access space~~.

1 3. (currently amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

2 based on ascertaining the equivalence, identifying a user

3 authorized to ~~access the restricted access space~~ activate the control

4 element.

1 4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 generating ~~an audible~~ a feedback signal indicative of at least part

3 of the digit sequence.

1 5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 identifying an operating mode based at least partly on a portion of

3 the digit sequence, the operating mode corresponding to ~~at least one of~~ a

4 code change request ~~and an access request~~.

1 6. (currently amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising:

2 generating ~~an audible~~ a feedback signal indicative of the identified

3 operating mode.

1 7. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the trigger

2 events correspond to manipulations of a door handle.

1 8. (previously presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the sequence of

2 signal interruptions correspond to interruptions in an optical signal.

Amendment and Response
GCS-001
U.S.S.N. 10/774,185
Page 4

1   9.   (cancelled)

1   10.   (currently amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising
2   issuing a signal, by the control element, used to activate use of wherein
3   the enclosure corresponds to at least one of an automobile, a boat, an
4   airplane, a restricted-access space, a building, a container, and a
5   cabinet.

1   11.   (currently amended) A method, comprising:
2   counting a number of trigger events associated with submitted by
3   a user through a user interface during successive time intervals, each
4   time interval having a predetermined duration, wherein the number of
5   trigger events counted during a given time interval can be greater than
6   one, the user interface affecting at least one operation of a vehicle;
7   associating the number of trigger events counted in each time
8   interval with one digit of a digit sequence representing a code being
9   submitted by the user to actuate the locking element and gain access to
10   the restricted-access space, wherein each digit of the digit sequence
11   corresponds to the number of trigger events counted during one of the
12   successive time intervals and can have a value greater than one; and
13   storing the code submitted by the user to set an activation code
14   required to perform the at least one operation of the vehicle.
15   comparing at least a portion of the digit sequence with a
16   previously-stored code; and
17   based on the comparison, performing the at least one operation of
18   the vehicle.

1   12.   (previously presented)   The method of claim 11, further comprising:

Amendment and Response
GCS-001
U.S.S.N. 10/774,185
Page 5

2   generating a human-perceptible signal indicative of the digit

3 sequence.

1 13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the user

2   interface corresponds to a door handle of the vehicle and the trigger

3   events correspond to manipulations of the door handle.

1 14. (cancelled)

1 15. (currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the sequence of

2   digits corresponds to interruptions in an optical signal ~~and the compared~~

3   ~~indicia correspond to a sequence of digital logic levels~~.

1 16. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one operation

2   of the vehicle corresponds to at least one of a manipulation of a locking

3   element restricting access to at least a part of the vehicle, a manipulation

4   of a window of the vehicle, and an ignition of the vehicle.

1 17. (currently amended) A system, comprising:

2   ~~a locking element restricting access to a restricted-access space~~

3 ~~defined within an enclosure;~~

4   a trigger-detection element detecting a number of trigger events

5 during successive time intervals, each time interval having a

6 predetermined duration, wherein the number of trigger events detected

7 during a given time interval can be greater than one; and

8   a control element [a] receiving indicia associated with the trigger

9 events detected by the trigger-detection element, [b] associating the

10 number of trigger events detected in each time interval with one digit of a

11 digit sequence representing a code, wherein each digit of the digit

12 sequence corresponds to the number of trigger events counted during

Amendment and Response
GCS-001
U.S.S.N. 10/774,185
Page 6

13 one of the successive time intervals and can have a value greater than

14 one, and (c) storing the code represented by the digit sequence to set an

15 activation code required for the control element to issue an activation

16 signal ~~actuating the locking element to provide access to the restricted~~

17 ~~access space in response to the code~~.

1 18. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, further comprising:

2 a feedback element generating a human-perceptible signal

3 indicative of at least part of the digit sequence.

1 19. (cancelled)

1 20. (currently amended) The system of claim 17, wherein the activation

2 signal issued by the control element activates use of ~~wherein the~~

3 ~~enclosure corresponds to~~ at least one of an automobile, a boat, an

4 airplane, a restricted-access space, a building, a container, and a

5 cabinet.

1 21. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the trigger-

2 detection element includes a signal emitter and a signal detector, the

3 signal detector detecting a sequence of signal interruptions in an optical

4 signal transmitted by the signal emitter.

1 22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the optical signal exhibits

2 an infrared wavelength.

1 23. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the signal detector

2 transmits the indicia associated with the sequence of signal interruptions

3 to the control element.

Amendment and Response
GCS-001
U.S.S.N. 10/774,185
Page 7

1   24.   (Original)   The system of claim 23, wherein the indicia associated with
2   the sequence of signal interruptions corresponds to a sequence of digital
3   logic levels.

1   25.   (currently amended)   The system of claim 17, wherein the control
2   element compares ~~the~~ a subsequently submitted digit sequence with ~~a~~
3   ~~predetermined~~ the stored activation code to determine whether to issue
4   the activation signal ~~actuate the locking element~~.

1   26.   (currently amended)   The system of claim 17, wherein the control
2   element identifies an operating mode based at least ~~partly~~ on a portion of
3   the digit sequence, the operating mode corresponding to ~~at least one of~~ a
4   code change request ~~and an access request~~.

1   27.   (new) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of temporarily
2   disabling actuation of the locking element in response to detecting a
3   number of consecutive failed attempts to enter an access code that
4   matches the stored code.

1   28.   (new) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of temporarily
2   disabling actuation of the locking element in response to detecting a
3   number of consecutive failed attempts to enter an access code that
4   matches the stored code.

1   29.   (new) The system of claim 17, wherein the control element temporarily
2   disables actuation of the locking element in response to detecting a
3   number of consecutive failed attempts to enter an access code that
4   matches the stored code.